

Lively Leytonstone Surprise Wycombe And Earn A Point

by Argus

Wycombe Wanderers 1,

Leytonstone 1

UNFANCIED Leytonstone, way out of the running for amateur football honours this season, gave Wycombe the fright of their lives on Saturday and quit Loakes Park with a thoroughly deserved point.

After the recent torrent of Isthmian League goals by the Wanderers' forwards this game was reckoned to be a comparatively mild hurdle compared with the Beechers Brooks to come . . . but it took Wycombe 70 frustrating, tantalising minutes soccer before they could even snatch a point.

The Wanderers, a sight too elegant and leisurely before the interval, were surprised by the fluency and comparative urgency of the "Stone's" football.

BETTER TEAM

Shaken by being a goal down at the break, the Wanderers added much more bite and energy to their academic ideas, and were clearly the better team in the second half.

Even so . . . a Peter James equalising goal was all they could manage, the Leytonstone team pouring back Spanish-style to pack their defence as Wycombe made a fierce bid for the winner.

Solid, safe Derek Griffin, the "Mr. Reliability" of Isthmian goalkeepers, worked like a windmill catching the Wycombe centres and crosses with great ease.

But some of the Leytonstone methods were not so impeccable. Highly questionable tactics were employed against fleet-footed Len Worley, who was tripped and hustled off the ball far too frequently for Loakes Park liking.

Admittedly, Worley might have spared himself some buffettings by parting with the ball more quickly but there can be no excuses for some of the heavy fouls against him.

Reluctance to move the ball at speed was a significant Wycombe fault on Saturday. Paul Bates, who had a very moderate game for him, and Cliff Trott, were all too frequently caught in possession.

Deprived of the defence-splitting passes he has been enjoying in recent games, Peter James had a grim fight with Leytonstone's centre-half, Flavell and only really began to find his way goalwards late in the game.

JIM'S INITIATIVE

Wing halves Ron Fryer and Jimmy Truett piled on the pressure in the second half to get their forwards moving and it was Truett's initiative that sparked off the equaliser.

But flashes of the old uncertainty still worried this Wycombe defence. On three occasions they were lucky to survive back-passing escapades when lively Leytonstone attackers nipped in to intercept.

Striking their best form of the season, Leytonstone always looked the more likely side in the first half, talented left winger Ron Cudmore starring in some brisk attacks.

JUST FAILED

When Fisher, with all the time he needed to clear, elected to pass backwards to Syrett, inside-right Farmer flashed in to snap up the ball and just fail to score.

Although James chased hard into the visitors' goalmouth—Griffin just beating him to the "kill"—there seemed more menace at the other end and after Syrett had been hustled in the Wycombe penalty area, Cudmore scored easily.

Wycombe looked a lot more workmanlike after the interval, with both wingers coming more into the game. There was a great deal more "violence" in the home shooting, Bates making Leytonstone fans gasp with relief as a scorching drive just skimmed the crossbar.

Typically it was Beck who joined in the Wycombe onslaught to give Griffin one of his most hectic moments, but it was Jimmy Truett, picking up a Trott pass and crossing beautifully, who found Peter James's head for the Wanderers' lone goal.

Bunching and packing tightly, the Leytonstone defenders held out gamely as Wycombe tried for the vital second point. The sparks began to fly in heated Wycombe attacks but Griffin and his gauntlet of fast tackling defenders were determined to play out time.